THE LORD GEORGE DIGBIE'S APOLOGIE FOR HIMSELFE,

Publiſhed the fourth of Ianuary. *Ann. Dom.* 1642.

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THE LORD GEORGE DIGBIES APOLOGIE FOR HIMSELFE,

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IT may be wondred at, that, after well nigh 2 yeares groaning under the most insupportable burthen of publique displeasure, and censure, I should now consider my self so much, as, in a generall calamity, to make an Apologie to the world; it should hope, that at a time when so great clouds of jealousie, and disesteem hang over persons of the most cleare, and unblemished reputations, any thing I can say may reconcile mee to those affections, which have bin transported with so much violence to my prejudice. But whosoever knowes mee well, and the great trouble of mind I indured when I found my selfe (by what demerit, God is my judge, I cannot guesse) fallen from that proportion of esteeme with my Country (of which I

was prouder then I can be of any worldly preferment) into so eminent a degree of disfavour with the representative body thereof (upon whose wisedome and Authority no man hath looked with more reverence, & veneration) that I was marked out as an enemy to the Common-wealth, I am sure cannot but expect from me some discovery of that sense; and that I should, at least endeavour to distinguish my misfortunes from my faults, whereby such, who are not engaged in a peremptory uncharitablenesse, may finde cause to change the Opinion they have taken upon trust of mee.

Nor am I out of hope, that the experience men have since had of the times inclination to calumnie, by the declining of so many persons of Honour, & integrity in the popular estimation, may at the last, open a way to so much justice & ingenuity on my behalfe, that all men may discerne in their own right, that if they shall so credulously consent, upon generall discourses, to sacrifice a third mans honour, and reputation, they shall open a doore to let in ruine to themselves, and may quickly loose the advantage of their owne innocence.

I shall begin my unfortunate story from the beginning of this Parliament; reflecting no further backe upon the precedent, then in a remembrance of the great comfort I then receiv'd in my Countries acceptation of my first attempts in it's service, at a time, as some were pleased to expresse it, when the Court was at the highest, whether to worke upon mens ambitions, or feares. Before that time I am sure I was as unacquainted with Action, as with Envie, having kept more company with bookes, then with men; and being so well

well content with that ſociety, that I had as little ambition, as merit to improve my condition. To this Parliament I was ſent on the behalfe of the Country wherein I lived, and truly, if I brought any paſſion or affection thither with mee, it was my former warmth improved againſt thoſe preſſures, and the perſons who begot thoſe preſſures, which were grievous to the people: and againſt theſe I will without vanity ſay, that I brought as great a reſolution to diſcharge my conſcience, and my duty, as any man in that Aſſembly, and had the happineſſe for ſome moneths, to receive that teſtimony. My converſation was, and I made or endeavoured to make my friendſhips, with thoſe, whoſe experience, and abilities, were moſt eminent for the publique ſervice, and to the reputation, and authority of theſe men, I confeſſe, for a while, I gave my ſelfe up with as much ſubmiſſion, as a man could, without reſigning the uſe of his owne underſtanding. In anything that was neceſſary, or but probably pretended to be neceſſary for the Common-wealth, wee never differed in the leaſt degree, but in improvements, in reall alterations, which were to be govern'd by prudentiall motives, wee were not alwayes of one minde. And whoſoever remembreth the paſſages of that time, muſt call to minde, that the firſt declination I ſuffer'd from the intereſt I ſeem'd to have, was in the buſineſſe of the Church: in which, having had frequent conſultations with the chiefeſt agents for a reformation, and finding no three men to agree upon what they would have in the place of that they all reſolv'd to remove, I agreed not with the prevaileing ſenſe, having not hardi-

neſſe enough to incline to a mutation, which would evidently have ſoe great an influence upon the peace, proſperity, and intereſt of the whole Kingdome. And thus, from the firſt debate of Epiſcopacy, upon the *London* Petition, all men obſerv'd the date of my unmerited favour began to expire. Then came on the tryall of the Earle of *Strafford*, in the which I muſt ſay, I failed not of my duty in proving the charge and evidence, before thoſe who were to judge of both. In the diſcharging of that duty, it was my fortune, by the unluckie acception of ſome expreſſions of mine, to draw upon mee a ſharpe malignity from ſome perſons of much intereſt in the Houſe, which never failed to manifeſt it ſelfe, after that accident, upon every the leaſt occaſion.

About this time, I was told by a friend, that I loſt much of my credit by being obſerv'd to be ſo much at Court; I replyed, that I had not then the ſame juſtice with other men, who were there more then I, though they avowed it leſſe; that it was a principall joy to mee, to ſee thoſe perſons, who had beene the prime Actours in the happy reformation of this Parliament, ſo acceptable at Court, and likely to have ſo great a ſhare in the chiefe places there, and the conduct of affaires for the future. That ſince it had pleaſed His Majeſtie to give ſo plenary a redreſſe to all the grievances of His Subjects, and to ſecure them for ever from the like invaſions, by ſuch a wall of braſſe as the Triennall Bill, I conceived that thence forward, there was no more to be thought on, but how in a gratefull returne to his Majeſty, to advance His Honour, and plenty, according as before ſuch happie ſettlements, I had often heard thoſe

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principall intendents of the publique good most solemnely professe, and consequently, that the Court, and Country were, in truth, now to be all of a peece, and there would hereafter be no more cause of jealousie betweene them: Lastly, that, howsoever, I thought my selfe as likely to do good there, as to receive hurt.

The first evidence I had of the disfavour of the House of Commons, (where I had served with all faithfulnesse, diligence, and humility,) was upon the printing of my Speech to the Bill of Attainder of the Earle of *Strafford*: As for the Good-Fridayes exercise which the delivery of it in the House procur'd me, I reputed that a most comfortable and eminent testimony of the continuance still of much justice and favour towards me in that Honourable House; since, after a dozen distinct charges upon the severall passages of that Speech, urged against me with great strictnesse and acrimony, by that number of the most eminent persons there, both in abilities and interests, and at a time when certainly most men of my opinion were at their Devotions, they were not able after foure houres debate to expose me, either upon the maine matter, or upon the bye, unto the least reprehension.

For the thing it selfe, I will say no more of it, but that it happened to be upon a very unpopular argument; but the cause and circumstance of the printing it, was this:

I did not finde onely that it was unfaithfully reported, and uncharitably interpreted, but was inform'd, that Copies went abroad of it so falsifie, and maliciously collected, as made the whole Speech a justification of

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my Lord of *Straffords* innocence; and Sir *Lewis Dives* having heard of such a Copie in the house of a Citizen of good quality, where he heard me mentioned as a person fit to have his name fixt upon posts, that I might be torne in pieces by the people, upon that reason earnestly desired me to give him a true Copie of what I had said in that Argument, which I did, and he forthwith gave direction for the printing it, without any privity of mine. Yet, if I had consented to it, and directed it, I professe, I should little have imagin'd, that (at a time when there was such an universall licence taken to print every thing, of how great irreverence soever,) either to Church or State, with impunitie, a Speech made in the House of Commons, a Speech so narrowly, and severely sifted, and examined there, and yet let passe without the least censure, either on the Speech it selfe, or the Author; that the Printing of such a Speech should rise to a crime of so high a nature, as to make mee for ever uncapable of any Honour, or employment in the Common-wealth, I professe could hardly have fallen within my reason or feares to suspect. And yet three moneths after the fact committed, after the Printing of an hundred Speeches more by other men, after my having severall times sued, and pressed for a hearing, whilst I was of the House of Commons; after by His Majesties favour I had sate six or seven weekes a member of the House of Peeres, after all this, no lesse a judgement (as farre as the Vote of the House of Commons could contribute to it) passed upon mee unheard, over, and above the shame of having the Speech it selfe burned by the hand of the hangman.

How

How I bore this affliction, with what anxiety of mind to my selfe, with what temper and submission to that Honourable Assembly, from whence the blow came, as many of my neare friends can testifie the first; so the envie, or malice of no man, can reasonably and justly taxe mee, as unto the other. How other young men, upon no greater a stocke of innocence then mine, might have suffered themselves to be transported upon such misfortunes, (not to give them any other terme) I leave to those to judge, who have not been so long brought up in the Schoole of affliction.

As this censure fell upon mee for many Moneths after the fault objected, so it rested within those walls where it begun without ever desiring a concurrence from that Court, where I was onely to be judged, and where I could onely answer for my selfe, and hope for a vindication, which increased my sufferings to an unspeakeable height, that I could by no meanes cleare my selfe in the place where I received the wound, nor could take notice of it, where I might be cleared by my Peeres, for feare of breach of priviledge of Parliament; Though my censure were knowne to all the Kingdome, yea I may say my infamy in print with forreigne Nations.

Under this weight (enough to have broken a body, and a mind better prepared for these exercises then mine) I suffer'd till the rudenesse, and violence of that Rabble, drave both their Majesties, for the safety of themselves and their children, to *Hampton* Court, whither by command I attended them. In this short jour-

ney many Souldiers, and Commanders (who had assembled themselves, joyntly to solicite the payment of their arreares for the late Northerne expedition, from the two Houses of Parliament) waited on their Majesties, & leaving them at *Hampton* Court, provided their owne accommodations at *Kingston*, the next place of receipt, and still so used for the over-plus of company, which the Court it selfe could not entertaine. To these Gentlemen, of whom few or none were of my acquaintance, and to this place was I sent by His Majesty, with some expressions of His Majesties good acceptance of their service, and returning the same night to *Hampton* Court, continued my attendance to *Windsor*, whither their Majesties then repaired. I had not been there one day, when I heard that both Houses of Parliament were informed, that I, and Colonell *Lunsford*, a person with whom I never exchanged twenty words in my life, had appeared, in a warlike manner at *Kingston*, to the terrour of the Kings Liege people; and thereupon had ordered, That the Shriffe of *Surrey*, and, as I conceive, that all other Shriffes throughout *England* should raise the power of their severall Counties, to suppresse the forces that he and I had leavyed.

When first this newes was brought me, I could not but slight it, as a ridiculous rumour; for being most certain, that I had never been at *Kingston* but onely upon that message of the Kings to forty or fifty Gentlemen, totally strangers to me, with whom I staid not the space of halfe an houre, at most, and in no other equipage, then a Coach and six hired horses, with one single man in the Coach with me, and one servant riding by: I thought it utterly

utterly impossible for the most Romancy malice it self, at so neare a distance, to raise out of that any serious matter of scandall, or prejudice upon me. But when soon after, I received from some of my friends, not only a confirmation of that seeming impossibility, but a particular accompt of the manner of it: How some information concerning me at *Kingston* had been referred to the examination of a Committee of my sharpest enemies; how the six Coach-horses I appeard with there, were turn'd by them into six score horses, and that mistake, I know not by what prevalence of my unhappinesse, or of my enemies credit, not suffered to be rectified by other witnesses there, who affirm'd the truth: Finding my selfe in this sad condition, but twenty miles off, and not knowing how the people in other places might be terrified, if reports concerning me should spread, but in a proportionable rate to remoter distances, they being now derivable from such considerable Authors, I must confesse I then began to look upon my selfe as a person of that rare misfortune, that my reputation would not weigh down the most improbable, or impossible accusation, but fit to receive any imputation of guilt, the most mischievous, or malitious instrument of calumny could invent. And in this condition, with no other discontent, then not believing my selfe much indebted to the world for good usage, I procur'd his Majesties licence, to transport a person of so great inconvenience, and danger, out of his Dominions into another Countrie; and with all possible speed remov'd my selfe into *Holland*, never suspecting that my guilt would increase with my absence, in the retired private life which I had re-

Solv'd on, and did, according to that resolution, lead beyond sea; having the vanity of some hope, that a little time discovering the falsehood of some things believ'd of me, would take away the inconvenience of other things that were but unworthily suspected. Some weeks I rested there without any new hurt, till the falsehood of a person, to whose trust I committed a Packet, brought it to a hand well contented with any occasion to satisfie his own particular private malice, and revenge upon me, and so my letters, one to the Queenes Majestie, and the other to my Brother, Sr *Lewis Dyves*, were publikely brought to be read in both houses of Parliament, from thence new arguments of guilt are so farre inforced against me, and the former displeasure revived & heightned to such a pitch, that at the same time I heard of the intereception of my letters, I found my selfe accused of high Treason too, and that for leavying warre against the King, a crime certainly that of all other, I could least suspect my selfe guilty of. And to say the truth, it came into my charge but by accident, for being, in generall charg'd of high treason, and the impeachment, in Particular bearing onely that I had appeard in warlique manner to the the terrour of the Kings subjects, a question was raised by a Lord or two, learned in the Law, whether that accusation would amount to treason, or no, and so leave was desired to amend the charge, which being granted, to make sure work, by the statute of 25. *Ed.* 3d. it was put in, that I had leavied warre against the King. If I were guilty, or suspected of so lowd a crime, how it came to sleep so long, or if not, how these letters (wherein upon an unpartiall survey there will not be

found

found so much as an Opinion as unto peace or warre) could minister occasion for a charge of my levying war against the King, I leave to equall consideration. I am far from censuring or disputing the resolution, or opinion of both, or either house of Parliament; no man receives a stroke from thence with more submission and humility, and the great reverence I beare to it hath made such an impression in mee, that the weight of their displeasure hath added many yeares to mee, but in so neare a concernment of my life, and my honour, that grave assembly may give me leave, without presuming to thinke their judgements unjust, to say, their evidence may be untrue, and the persons trusted by them, not so full of honour, ingenuity, or integrity, so free from passion, malice, interest, or affection, as they are thought. It will be no presumption, or disrespect to that great Councell to say, that I have many enemies, who have used all the ill arts, their wit or malice could suggest, to bring this affliction upon me, and have not in whispers, or in the dark, published their resolution to destroy me; witnesse their knowne tampering with very many persons, both by threats, and promises, to accuse mee, their creating and cherishing such monstrous untruths of my treating with the Danes, and other forreigne power, of a great treason of mine plotted, and discovered at *Sherburne*, with mighty warlike preparations there, of my being at the head of the Rebels in Ireland, and the like; to make mee odious to the people, to whose rage and violence they have often endeavoured to give mee up a sacrifice, the deepest sense I have of my afflictions, and injuries, shall never transport mee to heighten the repre-

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sentation of them to the least degree beyond truth, but who ever shall consider the penalty of treason, the ruine and desolation it brings to Families, the brand and infamy it fixes on our memories, and shall remember that this portion was design'd to mee, for going on my Masters errant, in a Coach and sixe horses, will believe that a mixture of sorrow and innocence, with so much passion as may keepe them company, may well be allowed to breathe it selfe with so much freedome, as to present to the world with a true and sensible life my sufferings, upon whomsoever the injustice and inhumanity may light, of having oppress and bow'd downe to the earth, a young man and all his hopes, by such undeserved calamities.

Since that time, other letters of mine or copies of letters (possibly never sent) have had the same fortune, and beene published to the world, to shew the follies and indiscretions of a man enough in her disfavour before, with Glosses and Comments to informe the people how much of the dangerous and pernitious counsels, preceded to be then, and still on foot, had passed through my hands, and how great an enemy I am to Parliaments, to this later most grievous and venemous imputation, I hope God will have preserv'd mee some kind of Antidote in mens memories, of what part I had the happinesse to beare in the passing of the Triennial Bill, and to it I shall onely say thus much, that I have had the honour to be a member of the one House, and must presume to thinke my selfe still a member of the other, that I value the honour, the dignity and the privileges of both, infinitely above the pleasures and

benefits

benefits of life, and if I ever wilfully contributed, or shall ever consent to the prejudice of either, I wish the desires of all my enemies may fall upon mee.

To that of my having had so great a hand in ill Counsels, which are expressed to be of His Majesties removing from *London* to a place of safety, and the like, I shall be bold to say, that the Letter to the Queens Majesty, from whence my enemies would make the inference, hath not with any equall considerer the least propending of advice any way, but is meerly an accompt of my owne intentions to apply my selfe to His Majesties service, either by my absence, or my attendance, according to either course, that His Majestie in His wisedome should thinke fit to take. Every body knowes I never had the honour to be a Counsellour, neither have I presum'd, without being questioned by His Majestie, to interpose in His affaires: when Hee hath grac'd mee with any question, I have answered with the freedome of a Subject, and a Gentleman. But had I beene a Counsellour, having seene what I had seene, and heard what I had heard, I, who have knowne such members of both Houses, mark'd out by the multitude for blessings, and such for Sacrifice: I, who can say with truth, that such of that rabble, cryed out, the King's the Traytour, such, that the young Prince would governe better, I, who can prove that a Leader of those people in the heat and violence of the tumult, cryed out, that the King was not fit to live: Had I beene a Counselellour, what had I beene (as the learning of Treason was then understood) should I not have advised His Majesty to withdraw to a place of safety, not from His Parliament,

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but from that insolent and unruly multitude, who had already brought into so much hazard the persons and the liberty of this till then most happy Parliament, and not staying there, did so lowdly threaten ruine, even to the Sacred Person of the King, Advertise his Majestie I did of the danger; advise him I could not, I had neither the ability, nor the authority.

In my letter to the Queene, at her first comming into *Holland*, it was observ'd, that in that expression, [of welcoming her from a Country not worthy of her] I shewed much venime and rancour to my owne Nation. I meant it not, and must appeale to those who are best acquainted with the Civility of language, whether the addresse might not be comely to any Lady of quality, who should upon any not pleasing occasion, leave one Country for a while to reside in another. And I hope e're long to welcome her Majestie backe from a place not so worthy of her, unto this Nation most worthy of her, without either disparagement to *Holland*, or complement to those to whom the unworthy of that letter was intended.

For the charge of boldnesse, and presumption in some expressions of those letters (though I might be glad to compounde my treason for incivilitie) since the suspicion of that depends upon the right understanding of language, and connexion of words; it will be no disrespect to any, through whose hands they have passed, to beleeve, that as they were otherwise intended by me, so that they are capable of other Interpretation. However, if in truth, misunderstanding, or ill breeding hath produced the other, I hope the conclusion will onely

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be, that I am an ill Courtier, or an ill Secretary, both which I do humbly confesse, not that I am no good English man, no good Subject. If in any of those letters there were any expressions of discontent or bitternesse, I shall say little more, then that they passed an examination they were not prepared for, and fell into hands that they were not directed to; and I am confident that many honest Gentlemen, who have had the happinesse to preserve their papers from such an inquisition, and shall consider the case they might be in, if all their secret conferences, and private letters were exposed and produced to the publique view, will cast up these letters of mine, in the number of my misfortunes, without making any addition to my faults: and certainly, who ever shall observe the measure of my sufferings, with any kind of indifference, will easily forgive such eruptions of passion, as were onely vented by mine to a brother, though they came within the reach of any other eare.

To draw now to a Period of my unfortunate story, which I cannot promise my selfe, from the generality, soe much charity as to vouchsafe the reading, if further then meere curiosity shall lead them; I returned into England not with so much joy to see my Country, as hope to be admitted upon my humble petition to his Majesty, to a faire, regular, impartiall vindication of my innocencie. and I protest to God, I looke upon the time I may naturally hope to live with no other comfort, then as it may make me still capable of that happinesse. I have follyes and infirmities enough about me to make me aske the pardon of every wise and good man, but for

treason (or for any voluntary crime (either against my Soveraigne, or my country) I say it with all humility, I will not accept a pardon from the King and Parliament. By the grace of God it shall never be said, that either the Parliament hath brought me, or His Majesty exposed me to a triall, my owne uprightnesse shall constantly solicite it, and without recourse in this to either of their favours, I will either stand a justified man to the world, or fall an innocent. But in the mean time, till it please God to blesse this nation with such a composure of the present distractions, as that Government and Law may have their rightfull and comfortable course, I implore only so much charity from men, as may seeme due to one, whose good intentions to his country have bin in some sort publiquely manifested, whose ills are yet but obscurely and improbably suggested. To conclude, let the few years I have liv'd be examined, and if there be found any rancour or venime in my nature, even toward particular persons which might in time contract it selfe to an enmity against the state, if I have bin a fomenter of jealousies & debate, or a secret conspirer against the honour and fame of any man, if I have worne Religion as a maske and vizard for my hypocrisie, and underhand cherish'd any opinions that I have not avowed, if I have bin led by any hopes of Preferment to flattery, or by the misse of it to revenge, if I have been transported with private ambition and beene inclin'd to sacrifice the least branch of the Publique peace and happinesse to my owne ends and advantage, let the complication of all these ills prepare

a judgement of treaſon it ſelfe upon me, and let me bee looked upon as a man who hath made ſoe quicke a progreſſe in wickedneſſe, that a few years more added to that account, would render me a prodigie to the world. But if in truth my life hath bin pleaſant to me under noe other notion, then as I might make it uſefull to my Country, and have made it my buiſines to beget and continue a good intelligence amongſt good men; If I have bin then moſt zealous and fervent for the liberties of the Subject, when the Power of Court was moſt prevalent; and for the rights of the Crowne, when popular licence was moſt predominant; if by my continuall ſtudy and practice of Religion, I have alwayes bin a true ſonne of the Church of England, and by my ſubmiſſion and application of my actions to the knowne rule of the Law, I have alwayes bin a true ſonne of the ſtate of England; if my actions have bin honeſt, and my words onely doubtfull; if my life only clouded with many imperfections, I hope the world will beleeue, I have bin overtaken with too great a meaſure of unhappineſſe, and every generous heart will eaſe me of ſome part of my burthen, by giving me the benefit of his good opinion.

FINIS.

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